Bengal has been reported to have come to a breaking point;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether similar situation has been reported in other States and Union Territories during the second half of 1996 and first quarter of 1997;

(d) whether Government propose to discontinue the Public Distribution System under such circumstances; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Including NCCF in the list of cooperative institutions

3679. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have included the National Consumers Cooperative Federation (NCCF) in the list of cooperative institutions that were making supplies of stationery and other items to the Government departments;

(b) whether the NCCF was required to draw up a list of items on its inventory together with sale price shown against each item and to forward the same to all the Government departments;

(c) if so, whether NCCF has drawn such a list with sale price; and

(d) whether NCCF is indicating the specifications of the items on its bills/ invoices to Government departments as is done by the Kendriya Bhandar?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) According to the information furnished by the NCCF, the prices are quoted to Government Departments against specific enquiries. The NCCF is however maintaining price-list of standard items being handled by them, in their branches.

(d) The NCCF has informed that they are indicating the specification of the items on the bills and invoices to the Government Departments in most of the cases.

Bringing medical practitioners under the purview of Consumers (Protection) Act

3680. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whther Government have studied, in depth, the implications of the recent Supreme Court judgment bringing medical practitioners under the purview of the Consumers (Protection) Act;

(b) whether the matter has been further discussed with the Medical Council of India; and

(c) the measures proposed to be undertaken to ensure compliance of the Supreme Court Judgment?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) In the judgment given on the Civil Appeal No. 688 of 1993, between Indian Medical Association versus V.P. Shantha & others the Supreme Court clarified that the medical profession was already covered